

of you are at the shrine of the former speaker, let me utter a word of warning. People grow like the thing they worship, and the first thing you know this town will be full of 'its.' Is it any wonder that one of the most ardent advocates of this New Theology, shocked by the extremes to which it must lead him, finally repudiated the whole thing, declaring it to be nothing more than a pitiless pantheism? Let all who will, worship such a God. As for me and my house, at the shrine of the great Father of revelation and grace alone, will we bow with our sacrifice of praise, thanksgiving and service.

THE CALL.

"Our Home Missions Committee faces a situation of immeasurable opportunity, and like all opportunities—passing."
—Rev. D. Clay Lilly, in Home Mission Herald.

The night was o'er, and faint and fair the Dawn
Began to flush the eastern sky, and then
A voice, strong, vibrant, yet persuasive too,
I heard. It called, methought, but not alone
To me—but to the sleeping Church, and said:
"Awake, awake, the hour has come! Up, up,
Ye laggards!—look, and see what armies pass
Of hungry souls that move into the West,—
Souls that have vainly sought for rest, and food
That satisfies."

The half-awakened Church
Looked out, and lo! there swiftly moved before
Her wondering eyes the giant form of one,—
God's messenger,—whose name she knew full well,
Though never yet in such stupendous form
Had seen. 'Twas that of Opportunity,—
And he it was who led that mighty host!

The Prayer.
O Thou who art the Church's King—touch Thou
Her inmost heart! Oh make her heed Thy call,—
For 'tis Thy call. Help her to realize
That Opportunity waits not, nor comes
Again. May willing hearts go forth to work,
And save souls filled with hunger for the Bread
Of Life,—for Now is the accepted time
And Thine the call.

O. H.

HAS THE CHURCH THE RIGHT TO HAVE A SOCIAL PROGRAM OF ANY KIND?

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In a former paper the writer called attention to an obstacle that lies in the way of our Church permitting herself to become responsible for a social program of any sort. If the facts of history referred to have been correctly given and correctly construed, for her to permit herself to be put in the position of endorsing the social program of the Federal Council would be nothing short of a breach of covenant. But the writer believes that we are of those who, even when they find that they have sworn to their own hurt, will not change.

I purpose in this paper to call attention to another reason why our Church cannot permit herself to be pledged to any social program whatever. It is this: Our Lord had no social program himself, and neither he nor his apostles outlined a social program for the Church.

This statement, if correct, must, of itself, determine the course of our Church. Is it correct, then? In seeking an answer to this question, attention is asked to the following statement:

"Jesus laid down only the foundation principles of his kingdom. Indeed, his kingdom was, itself, the fundamental principles of living—the leaven and the mustard seed. A start doctrine, elaborate, systematized, concrete, could have wrought

failure by its very finiteness. Jesus brought life. Churches, creeds, social institutions, manners of living—all the various methods of applying his basic ideas to the varying conditions of life, Jesus left to the determination of times and places, to the consciences of his followers. His were the fertile principles of life and growth, whose immediate application was for individuals, sects, countries, and races."

This statement I quote in its entirety from a little book entitled "Social Significance of the Teachings of Jesus," by Dr. Jeremiah W. Jenks, professor of political economy and politics at Cornell University, and issued by the International Committee of the Y. M. C. A. I do not cite it as a specimen of clear thinking or of lucid and accurate statement. I cite it because Dr. Jenks evidently thinks that churches have a right to put forth social programs, even though our Lord had none. We may be sure, therefore, that if he could have produced any plausible evidence that our Lord had a social program, Dr. Jenks would not have failed to do so. He is what is called an unwilling witness.

But a greater than Dr. Jenks has spoken to this point. I refer to Dr. Francis Greenwood Peabody, professor of Christian morals at Harvard University. The passage that I am about to cite is from his altogether charmingly written and highly-instructive book, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*. Amid all the incoherencies and irrelevancies that are poured forth in connection with this great and grave subject, it is in the last degree refreshing to read after a man like Dr. Peabody, who can think consecutively and has the courage to believe that after "the tumult and the shouting dies" the truth will be found holding the field. Here, then, is what Dr. Peabody has to say touching the proposition laid down above:

"The supreme concern of Jesus, throughout his ministry—it may be unhesitatingly asserted—was not the reorganization of human society, but the disclosure to the human soul of its relation to God. Jesus was, first of all, not a reformer, but a revealer; he was not, primarily, an agitator with a plan, but an idealist with a vision. His mission was religious"—(mark the words, "was religious")—"his central desire was to make plain to human souls the relation in which they stand to their heavenly Father. 'Lord, show us the Father,' say the disciples, 'and it sufficeth us.' 'The Gospel,' as a great German scholar remarks, 'is not one of social improvement, but of spiritual redemption.'"

Much more might be quoted, but is it really necessary? I mean no discourtesy in calling Dr. Peabody a Unitarian, and Dr. Adolph Harmack, the "great German scholar," to whom he refers, a rationalist. But surely our people ought to be able to see what is plain to the Unitarian and to the rationalist. The testimony of Dr. Peabody to the only point that I have cared to make is only the more cogent because Dr. Peabody, if he had any objections to the church's having a social programme, would have it only on the ground of expediency. In other words, while he would hardly say, "it is not right," it is not improbable, being the calm, clear thinker he is—that he would say, "It is not wise for the church to have a social programme." In other words, just as Jesus had in hand a larger and vastly more important work than the social improvement of the race, so it is quite probable that Dr. Peabody would feel that the church, likewise, has had committed to her, as her specific work, one that is far more fundamental and vastly more important than that of social improvement or re-organization.